

ALAN DALE SAYS ESMOND'S "MY LADY'S LORD" IS WEAK. NAT GOODWIN AND MAXINE ELLIOTT MAKE A HIT IN A NEW PLAY.

MELODRAMA IN A MYSTICAL SETTING.

It Is a Strange Play, He Remarks, Scarcely Worthy of the Empire Stock Company, with Its Experience and Veneer—It Needs Music.

By Alan Dale.

TRA-LA-LA, Tra-la-la. For two whole acts of "My Lady's Lord" at the Empire Theatre last night I looked for the blond and rosy-cheeked girl, I expected to see her in troops, tra-la-lal-ing in, and adding to the gaiety of Mr. H. V. Esmond's comic opera libretto. So sure was I at first that it was comic opera I was witnessing that I actually looked at the programme for a Harry R. Smith synopsis—one of those condensed "solid" chunks of alleged whimsicality that you find on the Casino programmes.

"My Lady's Lord" took you to the comic opera realm of Vaudeville—a veritable Gilbertian abode, such as the author of "The Mikado" and "Utopia, Limited," would have revelled in. There was a comic Prime Minister, addicted to surreptitious newspapers, the pursuit of which was against the law of the land. There was a comic opera prelate who looked like Richelieu gone to seed—red and wrinkled and sardonic. There was the languishing splasher, a la Lady Jane and Katisha, who loved a lord, unwisely, and all that sort of thing, don't you know. There were the courtiers who addressed for dinner, and there was the most in which all parcels were dropped at meal times. There were jokes about the modern bicycle in fantastic Vaudeville, and there was a comic old, Joseph Herbert, sort of person, who always said when he drank water, "I've drunk nothing else for fifteen years." Tra-la-la, Tra-la-la. And I looked for the chorus, My spirits rose when the girls dressed a la Weber and Fields, with Bonnie Magin locks, came on and sang "La-la-la" on harpsichords. They sang the "la-la-la" to Miss Jessie Millward, a very serious lady, to whom very few people would dare sing la-la-la. Miss Millward looked as though she didn't like being la-la-la'd at.

In the meantime the story was unfolding itself. Jack Martin, a young Londoner, was in love with the lovely Princess Doura of Vassania. He had followed her from London. And, furious at being betrothed to a libertine prince of her land, she had—on gay St. Hilda's day, married Jack Martin, and sent him instantly about his business. And St. Hilda's day! How Harry R. Smithy it was. You could almost see the "complications" of comic opera—everybody marrying everybody else, and the others all turning out to be long lost mothers! You could almost hear the music—Sullivan, Sousa, Herbert, or Edwards.

Then bang! bang! bang! With act three came right down regular melodrama of the second chamber—at midnight—I am a husband's description. Jack Martin insists upon his wife's submission. They were married. She shall be his. The room is dark, the night is silent. Ah, ha! Ah, ha! Into the chamber steals the villainous lover, a sort of Tarquin come to surprise sweet Lucrece in her folding-bedstead. And then—at the very right moment—the scorned and humiliated husband appears, sword drawn and the villain is wounded.

That is the quaint sort of affair "My Lady's Lord" proved to be. It was not until the third act had begun and ended that the Christmas audience was moved to signs of approval. But it was a clever, entertaining and agreeable third act, well thought out, and with an excellent scenic effect. Of course a play that relies upon a third act, reached only through musicless comic opera and girl-less burlesque, can scarcely hope to rouse New York to any very intense enthusiasm. But there are good things in "My Lady's Lord," and when young Mr. Esmond is old enough to know what he intends doing, when he sets out to do it, his career will be interesting. A young man who starts with comic opera and winds up with melodrama is just a little dazed and hazy. But throughout this play Esmond shows that he is not such a fool as he looks. That is hopeful, don't you think?

Occasionally there are dashes of humor that are almost Gilbertian. "Strike," cries Lady Doura, tragically. "You are my husband. It is your privilege." In London that line would cause roars of laughter, for it would appeal to a national failing. Here it went silently.

"Law," says somebody, "are only regarded by those who haven't sufficient education to wish to break them." There are plenty of queer little Gilbertian turns, odd little quips, quibbles, cynicisms, puns, and gentle oddities that might have made "My Lady's Lord" a biting satire, if Mr. Esmond—as I said before—had only been sure what he was trying to do. As it is, "My Lady's Lord" is only good red herding, after it has made a fevered attempt to be bad, boiled fowl. At first I thought Esmond might be trying to parody Anthony Hope, and gladly would I have welcomed such an effort—but the third act proved that he had no such ideas in his head, for it turned out to be good melodrama, of the stirring and highly situated order.

The Empire Stock Company did full justice to Mr. Esmond. In fact, he had much to thank the actors for. They had but scant opportunities for a similar display of grandiloquence. For example, as the phlegmatic Englishman, who says to the lovely Doura, "Go and park your trunks," played with admirable discretion and quiet humor. As his role was made up of many contradictions, this was a difficult thing to do. Mr. Faversham looked rather thin and worn, but I believe that he is expected to look like this.

Miss Millward as the lovely Doura acted the part nobly, but scarcely looked it. She was amusing and refined, however, and nobody could possibly find it in their hearts to wish for Mr. Esmond a better interpreter. Guy Standing as the Prince of Gokka, the villain in this tissue of comic opera absurdities, seemed to feel the hopelessness of his position. Should he be earnest? Should he be humorous? Should he pretend to be "lois"—himself, or simulate the grim jealous lover described? It was hard to know what to do, so he by doing nothing particular. He, the "boy" of these things, was down to his bicycle and his juvenile, Sidney.

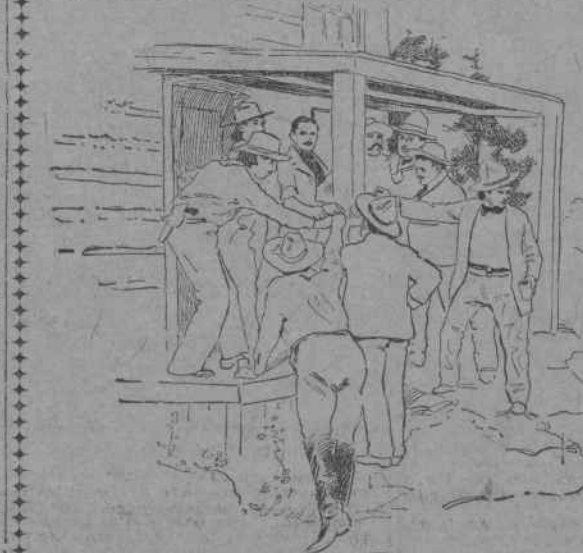
"COWBOY AND LADY" WINS PLAUDITS.

Richard Mansfield Revives "The First Violin" at Garden Theatre and the Audience Gives Unmistakable Signs of Favor.

"The Cowboy and the Lady," with N. C. Goodwin and Maxine Elliott, received the first metropolitan representation in this

Mansfield, in the expressed opinion of his audience, made a stage triumph of Jessie Fothergill's "First Violin" at the Garden

MARIE CAILLIE, RAYMOND HITCHCOCK AND EDMUND LAWRENCE IN "THE THREE LITTLE LAMBS" FIFTH AVE THEATRE



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JACK PERRY IN "MY LADY'S LORD" EMPIRE THEATRE



BLANCHE BURTON IN "MY LADY'S LORD" EMPIRE THEATRE



"THE COWBOY AND THE LADY" KNICKERBOCKER THEATRE

FAMOUS GERMAN COMEDIAN'S DEBUT.

Felix Schweighofer Is Heartily Applauded by a Big Audience at the Irving Place Theatre in "A Telegraph Girl."

Felix Schweighofer, Germany's greatest comedian, made his debut in this country at the Irving Place Theatre last night. The play was "A Telegraph Girl," the music of which is by Carl Millöcker.

He carried a child in his arms, like Van Bibber, he sang a song in German, he quoted the German poets, he spoke in the purest Prussian; he was dressed in poor clothes and also in the uniform of a conqueror of France. He was in the scenic environments of a boarding house, a railway station, a concert hall, lobby and a castle chapel—all in Germany.

Daughter in Tartarinas. There were Frau Schmidt's daughter, Clara in green lawn and pink tulle; Karl Linders, the musician, emanating the apothegm that "a soul without a stomach is like an angel without wings"; odd German characters, not exaggerated in caricature, at a railway ticket office; the Grand Duke's attendant exclaiming, "Remarkable, not to be believed, unforgettable circumstance!"

There was a Christmas tree in a scene, where the First Violin related a fable of wolf and goats to his son that was amusing and beautiful; two thunderstorms, a snow storm, delightful speeches, an exquisite aria from "Salome and Delilah," sung by Marie Gertrude Hall. There were dramatic incidents at which people held their breath.

Applause Very Hearty. When Mr. Mansfield sang or spoke of love with Miss Grey; when he said things like that, "My idea of heaven is that it is a place where there are no mistakes," when he stood still and mute, accused of being a forger, his words fell upon the most impressive silence, the silence of an instant that implied amazed admiration. After them the puns were passionate. Mr. Mansfield and other leading members of his company had to repeat before the curtain several times. The playhouse was crowded.

They Follow the Baron. Bruller, who is the chorus singer, and Caroline, follow on the track of the Baron whenever he visits influential friends to

congratulate him. They appear as a French noble and a Spanish noble in one instance, and do a song and dance for no reason, and a song and dance for no reason, and a song and dance for no reason.

Conspirators as Students. In the last act the conspirators appear as students. In order to play on the heart strings of a scholarly professor and get him enlisted on the side of Kern, a sentimental serenade completely won over the old gentleman, and the idiot nephew of the Hungarian Baron is not even placed in the race.

The German comedian appeared to score a big success with his audience. The management was also pleased with his work for it provided an enormous wealth of leaves for him during the third act. This was such a velocity affair that he took three minutes and the bass drummer to lift it over the footlights. Alan Dale will review Herr Schweighofer's work in Friday's Journal.

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Scenes and Some of the Players in Four New Stage Diversions Last Night.

mond stepped in, and he was merely foolish.

W. H. Groompton—poor Groompton—as the butler who had to drink halwaish and say, "I've drunk nothing else for thirteen years," was unable to do anything with an insane part. Same thing, J. H. Boorimo. Same thing, Blanche Burton. George W. Howard was the amateur of the occasion, and Sara Perry seemed anxious to add to the parody of the occasion by involuntarily burlesquing Ada Rehan.

Strange play, "My Lady's Lord"—a play scarcely worthy of the Empire stock company, with its experience and veneer. Esmond doesn't seem to be lucky for American managers. He is apparently too young. Why can't we put him under a glass case and keep him there till he matures? With a bevy of girls, and music by Sousa, Herbert, Edwards or Sir Arthur Sullivan, this "whimsical romance" might turn out to be a gold mine.

ALAN DALE.

"BEGGAR STUDENT" REVIVED.

Melodious Opera Pleases the Castle Square Patrons.

The Castle Square Opera Company returned last evening to light opera by the production of "The Beggar Student" at the American Theatre. Every inch of space in the big auditorium was packed and vociferous applause was given to Bessie Tannehill, who sang the part of Countess Palmanilla, and to Eloise Morgan, who was cast as Laura.

Among the fun makers Louis Casavani, as General Ollendorf, and Frank Moulton, as the jailer, received most praise. The opera was pretty continued and staged.

Holiday Fun at Music Halls.

Christmas week at the music halls began last night with a whoop and hurrah. Perhaps the most truly Christmas atmosphere was at Weber and Fields, where the twenty-first anniversary of the partnership of the two actors was celebrated. New and appropriate gifts were presented. "What a Girl" and "Barbaric Piquette," which the house was full of, were the main attractions. The members of the company were rendered a banquet by Messrs. Weber & Fields, which took place upon the stage.

The holiday bill at Hurlitz & Seeman's Music Hall was long and diverse enough to suit the tastes of the most fastidious. The bill included the highly talented Lillian Evans and Henry Mills, the Roman Acrobatic troupe, the Three Golden Girls, the Mademoiselle Billy Bink, Remond and Kessler and Wornowald's dog and monkey show.

The last week of the "Roger Brothers" in Wall Street began last night at the Victoria, with some new jokes and of course, the always new fun of the two comedians. The hundredth performance of the comedy on Wednesday night will be celebrated by the presentation of a new play, "The New Extraneous," and the "Wonderful Lamb" will succeed "In Wall Street" next Monday.

The Theatre Comique entered upon its first week as a combination house and offered Guy Hill's Bohemian Rhapsody, Billy Van and Nollie were the top-bills in what proved to be a lively variety show.

The story of Cinderella, as illustrated by elaborate motion pictures, drew a large holiday crowd to the Eden Musee. Billy Macdonette also moved popular and of course, the many who were received their share of attention.

Huber's Museum was crowded by admirers of Victorine, the sword swallower, the show-billed "The Girl and the Man," and the many other freaks and curiosities. A good audience show was provided the theatre.

To much rich food causes indigestion; Johnson's Digestive Tablets relieve it at once.

country last night at the Knickerbocker Theatre.

There were some vivid language, much clanking of glasses and more shooting and the like in the drama. The curtain was raised four times after the first act in response to long continued applause. After the second act the audience was not satisfied with having the curtain raised three times, but insisted on calling Goodwin before the curtain twice and was obviously disappointed when he refused to comply with their demands for a speech.

Whether the audience was justified in the favor that it accorded the play Alan Dale will tell the readers of the Journal on Wednesday. The Western flavor of the play's humor may be gathered from the following colloquy:

"What is the difference between an Indian and a bull pup?" "Dammed little," responds Mr. Goodwin in his role of Todde North, "Harvard '86," and cowboy in the West, whom the athletic advantages of that great university have made the peer of the most muscular of the real thing in the cowboy line in the West.

Goodwin in Fettle.

Goodwin apparently enjoyed his part as much as the audience enjoyed seeing him play it. Maxine Elliott, as Mrs. Weston, never looked better, and her comings were an evidence as to the reality of her visit to Paris last Summer.

Mr. Goodwin's support included Charles Scott, J. Lee Finney, Burr McIntosh, Clarence Hanlyside, Thomas Oberle, Minnie Dupree, Estelle Mortimer and Gertrude Ghien.

The story of the play setting forth the love of Teddy North for Mrs. Weston and the heroic deeds and general sacrifice of self for her was culled from London by Mr. Dale and appeared in the Journal last June when the play was produced there. It is from the pen of Clyde Fitch, and is in three acts.

The comedy touched last night were received with laughter and applause that seemed to be spontaneous.

Every Seat Filled.

Every seat was sold last night, and hundreds were turned away. The audience was a particularly brilliant one. Some of the floral pieces handed over the footlights were so massive that Mr. Goodwin found his labor in keeping up the role of a strong man far from a sinewy. A feature of the performance is a quadrille and a cake walk, in which Miss Elliott and Mr. Goodwin take part.

MINSTRELSY PLEASURES

AT THE HERALD SQUARE.

Primrose and Dockstader's Black Face

Comedians Cordially Received by the Audience.

George Primrose and Lew Dockstader

received old-fashioned black face minstrelsy at the Herald Square Theatre yesterday.

It was a successful effort. The stars were received with great cordiality. Their company, too, in which there were forty people, had its share of applause.

The first part of the programme was the old-time minstrel carnival, with Primrose, Dockstader, Lew Sully, and Larry Doney, and many others. Primrose made the hit of the show with his song, "Get Your Habits On."

The comic "The Chair Boy's Dream," specialties by Primrose and Dockstader individually, and an act by the Juggling Johnsons, completed the programme.

Theatre last night. The player had brown hair, thick, tinged with red; eyes of which the expert that read one's destiny in one's face might have said, "They are eyes of a musician," a youthful manner.

He carried a child in his arms, like Van Bibber, he sang a song in German, he quoted the German poets, he spoke in the purest Prussian; he was dressed in poor clothes and also in the uniform of a conqueror of France. He was in the scenic environments of a boarding house, a railway station, a concert hall, lobby and a castle chapel—all in Germany.

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